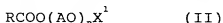CLAIMS

1.   A plant-activating agent selected from the group consisting of

       (1) an organic acid derivative which is derived from the organic acid having two functional groups and wherein at least one of the above-mentioned functional groups is bonded to a group containing 1 to 30 carbon atoms;

   (2) a compound represented by the following formula (II):

       $RCOO(AO)_nX^1$ (II)

wherein R represents an alkyl or alkenyl group having 11 to 29 carbon atoms; X^1 represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl or acyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, an alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms, or a counter ion; AO represents at least one group selected from oxyethylene, oxyprolylene and oxybutylene groups and may be random or block; and n represents an average number of moles added and is zero to 30; and

       (3) a glycerol derivative.

2.   The plant-activating agent as claimed in the claim 1, which is the organic acid derivative (1) and the compound represented by the following formula (I):
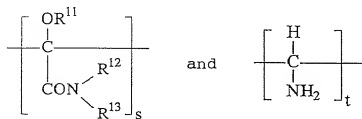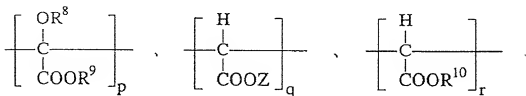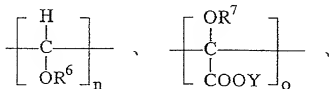
       $A-(B)_a-C$ (I)

wherein A and C are independent each other and each thereof is a group selected from -COOX, $-COOR^1$,

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$$-\mathrm{CON}\begin{matrix} \diagup R^2 \\ \diagdown R^3 \end{matrix}$$
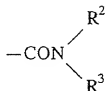
, $-R^4$, $-OH$, and $-OR^5$; and

B is a group selected from $-(CH_2)_l-$, $-(CH=CH)_m-$,

$$\left[\begin{matrix} H \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \\ OR^6 \end{matrix}\right]_n \quad , \quad \left[\begin{matrix} OR^7 \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \\ COOY \end{matrix}\right]_o \quad ,$$

$$\left[\begin{matrix} OR^8 \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \\ COOR^9 \end{matrix}\right]_p \quad , \quad \left[\begin{matrix} H \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \\ COOZ \end{matrix}\right]_q \quad , \quad \left[\begin{matrix} H \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \\ COOR^{10} \end{matrix}\right]_r \quad ,$$

$$\left[\begin{matrix} OR^{11} \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \quad \diagup R^{12} \\ CON \\ \quad \diagdown R^{13} \end{matrix}\right]_s \quad and \quad \left[\begin{matrix} H \\ | \\ -C- \\ | \\ NH_2 \end{matrix}\right]_t$$

wherein each of X, Y and Z represents independently a hydrogen

atom or a counter ion,

each of R^1, R^4 and R^9 represents independently a hydrocarbon group

having 1 to 30 carbon atoms,

R^5 is a group selected from

$$\left[\begin{matrix} R^{14} \\ | \\ -CH_2CHO- \end{matrix}\right]_u -H \quad , \quad \left[\begin{matrix} OR^{15} \\ | \\ CH_2 \\ | \\ -CH_2CHO- \end{matrix}\right]_v -H \quad ,$$
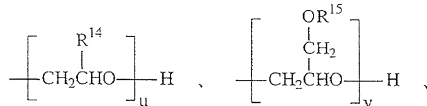
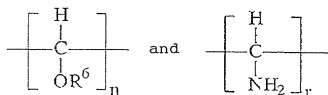a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms and an acyl group

having 1 to 30 carbon atoms, and

each of R^2, R^3, R^6, R^7, R^8, R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12}, R^{13}, R^{14} and R^{15} represents independently a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms,

a is zero or a number selected from 1 or more,

each of l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s and t represents independently a number selected from zero to 10,

each of u and v represents independently a number selected from 1 to 50; which are selected so that a group containing 1 to 30 carbon atoms may be bonded to at least one of the functional groups in the molecule; when both of A and C are groups selected from $-R^4$, -OH and $-OR^5$, B is not a group selected from $-(CH_2)_1-$, $-(CH=CH)_m-$,

$$\left[\begin{array}{c} H \\ | \\ C \\ | \\ OR^6 \end{array}\right]_n \quad \text{and} \quad \left[\begin{array}{c} H \\ | \\ C \\ | \\ NH_2 \end{array}\right]_r$$

3.   The plant-activating agent as claimed in the claim 2, wherein the organic acid has at least one hydroxyl group as a functional group.

4.   The plant-activating agent as claimed in the claim 1, which is the compound (2) represented by the formula (II) wherein n is zero to 20; R represents an alkyl or alkenyl group having 13 to 21 carbon atoms, X represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl or acyl group having 1 to 22 carbon atoms, an alkenyl group having 2 to 22 carbon atoms, or a counter ion (when n is not

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zero, the counter ion is excluded).

5.   The plant-activating agent as claimed in the claim 1, which is the glycerol derivative (3) and which is selected from the group consisting of an ester of glycerol and an acid, an ether of glycerol and a hydroxyl group-containing compound, a condensate of glycerol or a derivative thereof, and glyceric acid or a derivative thereof.

6.   A plant-activating composition comprising a plant-activating agent as claimed in the claim 1 and at least one of a fertilizer agent, a surfactant and a chelating agent.

7.   The composition as claimed in the claim 6, wherein the surfactant is selected from a nonionic surfactant, an anionic surfactant and an amphoteric surfactant.

8.   A method of activating a plant by applying a plant-activating agent as defined in the claim 1 to the plant.

9.   Use of a plant-activating agent as defined in the claim 1 for activating a plant.